

(PATENT)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
(Case No. 99,252-A)

In re Application of:)	
)	
MERTENS, et al.)	
)	Group Art Unit: 1746
Serial No.: Not yet assigned)	
)	Examiner: Not yet assigned
Filed: November 1, 2001)	
)	
For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR)	
REMOVING A LIQUID FROM A)	
SURFACE)	

Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Please enter the following preliminary amendment in the above-referenced patent application.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 2, 3, 7 and 17 without prejudice. Please amend claims 1, 12 and 13 as follows. A marked up version of the amended claims, to show all the changes, is attached hereto on pages separate from the amendment in accordance with 37 CFR 1.121(c)(1)(ii).

1. (Amended) A method of removing a liquid from at least one surface of at least one substrate comprising the steps of:
 - subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement
 - supplying a liquid on at least a part of said surface of said substrate; and

locally heating said liquid on said part of said surface, while supplying said liquid, wherein during the step of subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement and supplying liquid, at least locally a sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary is created and wherein said rotary movement is performed at a speed to guide the sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary over the substrate.

12. (Amended) A method of removing a liquid from a first surface and a second surface of at least one substrate comprising the steps of:

subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement

supplying a liquid on at least a part of said first side and at least a part of said second side of said substrate; and

locally heating said liquid on said part of said first surface and on said part of said second surface, while supplying said liquid, to thereby locally reduce the surface tension of said liquid, wherein during the step of subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement and supplying liquid, at least locally a sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary is created and wherein said rotary movement is performed at a speed to guide the sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary over the substrate.

13. (Amended) An apparatus for removing a liquid from at least one surface of at least one substrate, said apparatus comprising :

a substrate holder which is subjectable to a rotary movement, said substrate being releasably held by said substrate holder;

at least one liquid supply system for applying a liquid on at least a part of said surface of said substrate;

at least one heat source for locally heating said liquid; and

said heat source and said liquid supply system being positioned such that said heating is applied closer to the centre of said rotary movement of said substrate holder than said liquid and wherein said heat source and said liquid are positioned such that at least locally a sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary is created on said surface of said substrate.

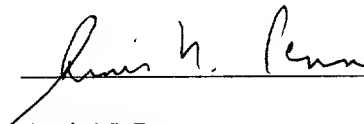
Applicants submit herewith a preliminary amendment. If for any reason, the application is not considered to be in condition for allowance on the next Office Action and an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 913-0001.

Respectfully submitted,

McDonnell Boehnen Hulbert & Berghoff

Dated: November 1, 2001

By:



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Attorney for Applicant

APPENDIX UNDER 37 CFR 1.121(c)

1. (Amended) A method of removing a liquid from at least one surface of at least one substrate comprising the steps of:

subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement

supplying a liquid on at least a part of said surface of said substrate; and

locally heating said liquid on said part of said surface, while supplying said liquid,

wherein during the step of subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement and supplying liquid, at least locally a sharply defened liquid-ambient boundary is created and wherein said rotary movement is performed at a speed to guide the sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary over the substrate.

12. (Amended) A method of removing a liquid from a first surface and a second surface of at least one substrate comprising the steps of:

subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement

supplying a liquid on at least a part of said first side and at least a part of said second side of said substrate; and

locally heating said liquid on said part of said first surface and on said part of said second surface, while supplying said liquid, to thereby locally reduce the surface tension of said liquid, wherein during the step of subjecting said substrate to a rotary movement and supplying liquid, at least locally a sharply defened liquid-ambient boundary is created and wherein said rotary movement is performed at a speed to guide the sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary over the substrate.

13. (Amended) An apparatus for removing a liquid from at least one surface of at least one substrate, said apparatus comprising:

a substrate holder which is subjectable to a rotary movement, said substrate being releasably held by said substrate holder;

at least one liquid supply system for applying a liquid on at least a part of said surface of said substrate;

at least one heat source for locally heating said liquid; and
said heat source and said liquid supply system being positioned such that said heating is applied closer to the centre of said rotary movement of said substrate holder than said liquid and wherein said heat source and said liquid are positioned such that at least locally a sharply defined liquid-ambient boundary is created on said surface of said substrate.